

# RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS

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Vol. XXII

January, 1929

No. 1

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DUTCH MEDAL IN COMMEMORATION OF THE  
BRITISH OCCUPANCY OF RHODE ISLAND.

*From original in the  
Museum of the Society.*

Issued Quarterly

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68 WATERMAN STREET, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

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RHODE  
HISTORICAL



ISLAND  
SOCIETY

## COLLECTIONS

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CLAUDE R. BRANCH, *President*  
HOWARD W. PRESTON, *Secretary*

GILBERT A. HARRINGTON, *Treasurer*  
HOWARD M. CHAPIN, *Librarian*

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The Society assumes no responsibility for the statements or the opinions of contributors.

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### Rhode Island Signboards

The January and April, 1926, issues of the *Collections* contain an illustrated account of Rhode Island signboards, which the following notes supplement.

Professor William C. Poland reports that the *Sign of the Swan* was a rude painting that hung on South Water Street, Providence, about 1866, with the following lines:

"This is the Swan  
That dips her bill in porter  
And why not we  
As well as she  
To become topers."

Professor Poland adds that there was a Dew Drop Inn on North Main Street at about this time, but does not recall any illustrated signboard in connection with it. This punning title, with many varied modifications, has become very popular in recent years along state highways.

The late Mr. Charles A. Calder discovered an advertising verse printed in the *Providence Gazette* in 1822 referring to the



*Harvest Home Inn*, later called the *Bull Dog Tavern* in Providence. It reads:

"When from the markets busy hour they turn,  
To seek for rest, nor longer wish to roam,  
His well spread board, and couches soft with down,  
Shall give them pleasure at the Harvest Home."

#### RATES OF TOLL.

For every waggon, cart, truck or sled drawn by two Horses or oxen 10 cents if drawn by three cattle 12½ cents If drawn by more than three cattle 15 cents, for every sleigh Drawn by one horse 6 cents if drawn by more than one Horse 12½ cents, for every coach, chariot, phaeton or Curricie 25 cents, for every chaise, chair, sulkey or other Pleasure carriage drawn by one horse 12½ cents for every Additional horse 6 cents, for every horse and horse cart Or waggon 6 cents, for a person and horse 6 cents, horses Or mules in droves 2 cents per head, neat cattle in droves 1 cent per head, sheep or swine in droves ½ cent per head For all load over fifty hundred pounds ½ cent per hundred For each additional hundred.

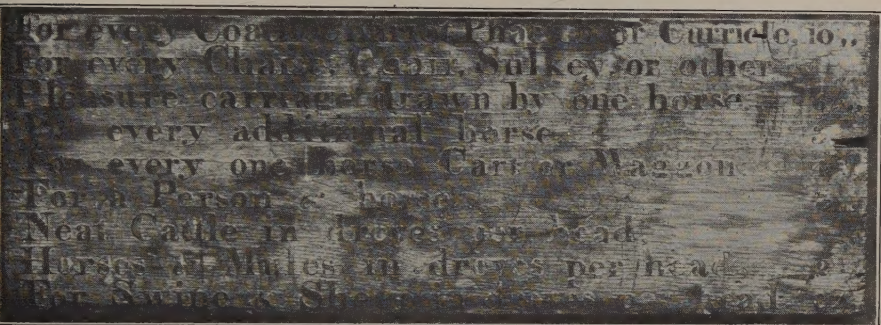
#### POWDER MILL TURNPIKE TOLL SIGN

*Owned by the late Mr. George C. Dempsey.*

Two toll signs, exhibited in a loan exhibition held by the *Society* in 1922, are reproduced in this issue of the *Collections*. One of these is the toll board, which in 1815 hung on the Powder Mill Turnpike now Smith Street, at the corner near the Fruit Hill Tavern. This sign was later transferred to the corner of Smith Street and Belvedere Boulevard, then to the corner of Smith and Eaton Streets, and finally to Centredale, at the junction of the George Waterman Road and Putnam Avenue. It was loaned by the late Mr. George C. Dempsey.

The other sign was used at a toll gate kept by William Wilder, at the corner of Lindsey Pike and Log Bridge Road, now

Weeden Street and Smithfield Avenue. This gate was surrounded by a dense forest, and some people, who objected to paying toll, went around the gate. Mr. Wilder prevented the



SIGN WHICH FORMERLY HUNG AT THE TOLL GATE AT  
THE CORNER OF WEEDEN STREET AND SMITHFIELD AVENUE.

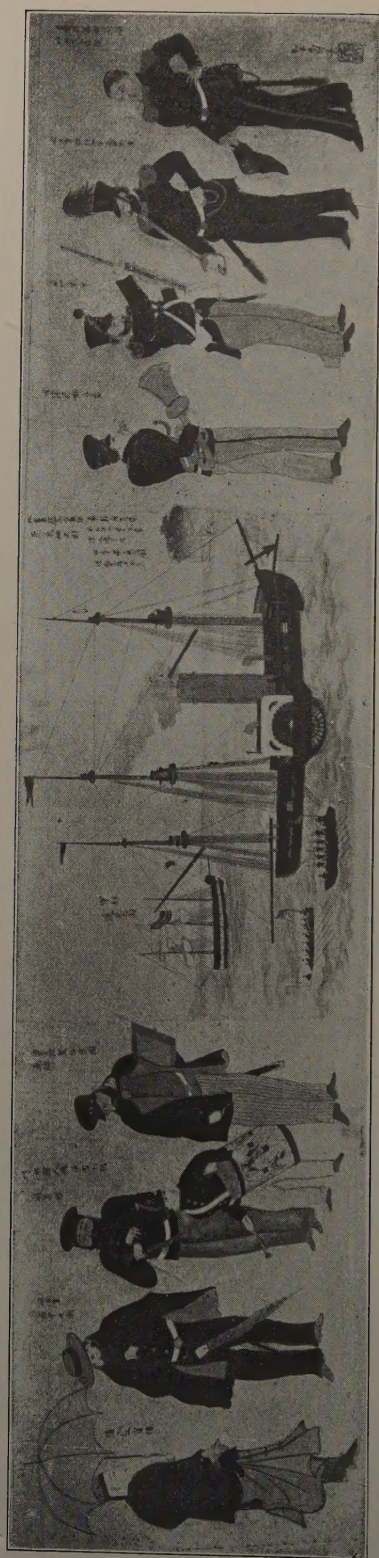
*Owned by the Pawtucket Chapter, D. A. R.*

continuance of this travel by having his family dig trenches so that all travelers had to go through the gate and pay toll. This sign was loaned from the Daggett House Museum by the Pawtucket Chapter, D. A. R.

## The Japanese Cartoon

The curious Japanese cartoon, which is reproduced in this issue of the *Collections*, was painted by the Japanese artist Matsumoto Haruki, and represents his impression of Commodore Matthew C. Perry's famous visit to Japan. The cartoon is signed by the artist, and the figures in the cartoon are described by the Japanese inscriptions. The figure at the extreme right represents Commodore Perry, and the one at the extreme left a Chinaman. The other figures represent the types of the American uniforms that particularly interested the oriental artist. The ship in the foreground is Perry's flagship, and its dimensions are given in Japanese units of measure.





JAPANESE CARTOON REPRESENTING PERRY'S VISIT TO JAPAN.

*From original in the Society's Museum.*

## Rhode Island and the Loyalists

BY HOWARD W. PRESTON

### 2. *The Deposition of Governor Wanton*

The news of the battle of Lexington on April 19, 1775, reached Providence the same evening and Governor Wanton issued a warrant summoning the Rhode Island General Assembly to meet in special session on April 22, 1775.

This assembly voted "that the 11th day of May next be set apart as a day of fasting, prayer and humiliation that his Honor the Governor be and he is hereby requested to issue a proclamation accordingly. (R. I. Col. Rec. VII, 409.)

The Lower House also voted that an army of observation consisting of fifteen hundred men be raised "to repel any insult or violence that may be offered to the inhabitants and also if it be necessary for the safety and preservation of any of the colonies to march out of the colony and join and co-operate with the forces of the neighboring colonies" and sent the measure to the upper house. (House Journal, April 1775, Ms. in R. I. Archives.)

The Journal of the Upper House reads "Tuesday, April 25, 1775 . . . Vote of the Lower House for raising with all Expedition, Fifteen Hundred Men was read and concurred. His Honor the Governor, the Deputy Governor and Thomas Wicks and William Potter, Esqrs., two of the Assistants entered their Protest against said vote and Peleg Barker, Esq., was absent at the time of said Vote being concurred with." (Ms. Journal of Upper House, April 1775, in R. I. Archives.)

In the written protest which these gentlemen had recorded on the pages of the journal of the Upper House they said "we are of opinion that such a measure will be attended with the most fatal consequences to our charter privileges, involve the country in all the horrors of a civil war; and as we conceive, is an open violation of the oath of allegiance which we have severally taken upon our admission into the respective offices we now hold in the colony."



As at this time the Upper House consisted of the Governor, Deputy Governor and ten Assistants, the vote, Barker being absent, stood 7 in favor and 4 against the measure.

Two of the protesting gentlemen, Deputy Governor Sessions and Mr. Potter later craved the forgiveness of the General Assembly and the good people of the Colony and were restored to favor.

When a fortnight later the General Assembly convened at Providence for the regular May session Governor Wanton, though re-elected to that office, did not appear to take the oath of office as required by law. Moreover he refused to sign the commissions of the officers appointed to the army of observation and neglected to issue a proclamation for the day of prayer and fasting. The Assembly considering the Protest made at April session by the Governor, Deputy Governor and two Assistants as a reflection upon the members of the Assembly forbade the administration of the oath of office to Governor Wanton except in free and open Assembly with the consent of the Assembly and that, until he took the oath of office in that manner he could not legally act as Governor of the Colony. Meanwhile the Secretary of the Colony was ordered to sign the commissions of the newly raised army and the Deputy Governor was authorized to convene the Assembly upon any sudden emergency.

At the June 1775 session Governor Wanton appeared before the Assembly and demanded that the oath be administered to him, but the Assembly voted that he had not given satisfaction and continued the act. Meanwhile Deputy Governor Nicholas Cooke of Providence served as acting governor.

At the October session the Assembly voted that "Joseph Wanton by the whole course of his behavior—hath continued to demonstrate that he is inimical to the rights and liberties of America, and is thereby rendered totally unfit to sustain the said office—This General Assembly do therefore resolve and declare and by the authority thereof, it is resolved and declared that the said Joseph Wanton hath justly forfeited the office of Governor of this Colony; and that thereby the said office is become vacant. (R. I. C. R. VIII, 393.)



Governor Wanton had so firmly maintained the rights of Rhode Island against the claims of the British naval officers at Newport that the Colony parted with him with regret. Their reluctance to sever relations is shown by the nearly six months delay in taking decisive action in vacating the office of Governor.

He remained in Newport during the British occupation and after the evacuation of the town, and remained undisturbed. The property of his sons was confiscated but no action was taken against him or his estate.

The report of the Sheriff of the County of Newport who removed by order of the Assembly the property of the Colony from Governor Wanton's house is interesting as showing what articles were considered of such importance as to be intrusted to only the highest official of the Colony. The Sheriff removed "a chest, in which were and are, deposited the Charter of the Colony aforesaid; Fones Book of Records; a large number of bundles of papers, seventeen dies for counterfeiting dollars and half johannes, an instrument for edge-milling, and other implements for counterfeiting."

### 3. *The First Confiscations*

The town of Newport was divided in sentiment. The officers of the crown and many, perhaps most, of the leading citizens were opposed to any movement of resistance. The British naval vessels in the harbor were an impressive proof of the power of the Great Britain. The Sons of Liberty regarded the supplying of provisions to the fleet in Newport harbor as rendering assistance to an enemy and strove to prevent it. Esek Hopkins with six hundred men was ordered in October, 1775, to the island of Rhode Island "to receive the stock, repel the invaders and arrest George Rome." The general marched his troops onto the island and established his headquarters just north of Newport at the estate of George Irish. He did not secure George Rome, who had taken refuge on a British vessel in the harbor, but he laid a heavy hand on British sympathizers, the loyalists, as is shown by act of the Assembly in October, 1775.

The Assembly at that time approved the conduct of General Esek Hopkins in taking into his possession, in behalf of the Colony the estate of George Rome, Benjamin Brenton, the heirs of Andrew Oliver, Esq., deceased; Jahleel Brenton and Thomas Hutchinson as persons inimical to the true interests of the Colony. (R. I. C. R. VII, 376.)

The example set by their zealous general was followed by the Assembly. They ordered the Sheriff of Kings County to take possession of both the Point Judith farm and the Exeter farm of Samuel Sewall and also the estate of Mr. Thomas Moffatt in North Kingstown. This was the snuff mill property, the birth place of Gilbert Stuart. The Sheriff of Bristol County was ordered to take possession of the estate of John Borland, late of Cambridge, Mass., deceased. The Sheriff of Newport County was ordered to take possession of the house and estate of Ralph Inman in Newport and lease the same to the present tenant. The Sheriff of Providence County was ordered to take possession of the shop and house in Providence of Gilbert Deblois of Boston, Merchant, and the shop of John and Jonathan Simpson of Boston.

At this session was passed the first of the series of acts against the loyalists. This was an act providing for the punishment of death for persons found guilty of holding traitorous correspondence with the ministry of Great Britain or their officers or agents or supplying the ministerial army and navy with warlike or naval stores or acting as pilots on board of any of their ships or vessels. (R. I. C. R. VII, 388.) It was voted that all deeds or conveyances of any of the real estates of George Rome, Jobleel Brenton and Benjamin Brenton of Newport, Ralph Inman, Gilbert Deblois and Samuel Sewall of Boston, Thomas Hutchinson, late of Boston, Thomas Moffatt now or late of New London, the heirs of Andrew Oliver and John Borland both late of Boston deceased, lying in Rhode Island made before October 5, 1775 and not recorded at that time should be void. (R. I. C. R. VII, 394.)

This is the first list of loyalists. Only the first three were Rhode Islanders and of these Rome was probably only a tem-

porary resident. These men were non-resident landlords. Benjamin Brenton was taken into custody by General Esek Hopkins, but upon petitioning the General Assembly, he was reinstated in the friendship and esteem of his countrymen, permitted to return to his distressed family and his estate restored to him. None the less Benjamin Brenton could not be classed among the active supporters of the Revolution. He was suspected by his fellow townsmen because he was a contractor supplying the ministerial fleet with provisions. He remained during the British occupation in Newport and probably served as a contractor and suffered the vexations attending that business. In 1783 he petitioned Sir Guy Carleton for the payment of £427 10 s. due for peat furnished General Prescott in 1778 and 1779. (Amer. Mss. in the Royal Institute, vol. IV, p. 202.)

Apparently ruined as so many of the Newport merchants were by the war, he continued to reside there until his death in 1830. His wife was the daughter of Silas Cooke, senior.

Against the confiscation of the property of Capt. Jahleel Brenton, an officer in the King's Navy, no extenuating circumstances could be alleged and his estate of one hundred and seventy-six acres with dwelling house was leased during the war by the State to tenants. It was advertised in the *Providence Gazette* of October 18, 1780. Later it was reported that the claims against the estate exceeded its value and the State released it to the creditors.

On September 19, 1783, Capt. Brenton appeared before the Commissioners for the claims of loyalists and swore that during the war he served most of the time on board of his Majesty's ships, that the one hundred and seventy-seven acres received by the will of his father was worth £2250, that Mrs. Brenton had a half interest in house and land in Newport, that he had also 1600 acres in Maine. He also claimed the loss of Indian corn, potatoes, 250 bushels of oats, 50 bushels of flax seed, 350 bushels of apples, 50 loads of hay, and 70 bushels of turnips. Barn, dairy house and crib costing £690. He had received from the Crown £50 a year until he retired from the Navy on half pay, when his allowance was increased to £100



per annum. (Ontario Bureau of Archives Report 1904, p. 1301, and Cokes Notes, p. 3.) His three sons served in the Royal Navy. The oldest, Sir Jahleel Brenton, attained the rank of Rear-Admiral of the Blue, K.G.B., the second Edward Pelham became Port Captain and the third James died in 1799, while serving under Nelson in the Mediterranean.

## Iconography of Rhode Island

### First Period (1740-1800)

1. 1740 Painting of Newport Harbor, which according to tradition was painted by an officer of the British army stationed at Newport. It occupied a panel over the mantle piece in a house on Mill Street belonging to Mr. James Phillips. An engraving of this painting was made in 1864 by John P. Newell and entitled "Newport in 1730." Hammett (p. 123) states that this date is an error and ascribes the date 1776. From the condition of Long Wharf, the painting would appear to have been executed before 1745, and from the appearance of the State House, after 1739. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XVIII:92.

2. 1755 View of Beaver Tail Lighthouse, drawn by Peter Harrison. Original in Colonial Office, London. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XX:90.

3. 1765 View of Bristol Neck. September, 1765. Painting in Crown Collection, London. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XX:99.

4. 1768 View of Purgatory, Newport. Pencil drawing by Du Simitiere. Original owned by Library Company of Philadelphia. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* X:41.

5. 1768 View of Redwood Library. Pencil drawing by Du Simitiere. Original owned by Library Company of Philadelphia. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XII:40.

6. 1777 Bird's eye view of Providence cut on a powder horn in 1777 by Stephen Avery. Original in Shepley Library. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XI:84 and 88.



*A S.W. View of the* BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE, Providence, R I

FROM THE *Massachusetts Magazing* FOR AUGUST 1789.

*From original in the Society's Library.*

7. 1777 Bird's eye view of Providence cut on a powder horn in 1777 by Charles Hewit. Owned by Charles D. Cook. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XXXI:123 and 124.

8. 1778 The Siege of Rhode Island, taken from Mr. Brindley's House on the 25th of August, 1778. Printed in the *Gentlemen's Magazine*, London, February, 1779. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XX:82.

9. 1779 Bird's eye view of Rhode Island, on medal in commemoration of the British occupancy of Rhode Island. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XXII, cover.

10. 1783 Landung einer Franzosichen Hulfs-Armee in America, zu Rhode Island am 11ten Julius, 1780. Printed in "Historisch-genealogischer Calendar oder Jahrbuck fur 1784." Liepzig, 1783. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XVIII:80.

11. 1789 View of Block Island from Chart of 1789. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XI:61.

12. 1789 "A S. W. View of the Baptist Meeting house, Providence, R. I. by S. Hill, Sculp." Printed in the *Massachusetts Magazine* for August, 1789. Reprinted in *Rippon's Baptist Register*, London, 1790. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XXII:11.

13. 1795 Newport in 1795, by Samuel King, Engraved 1795. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XIV:16.

14. 1798 View of Providence River engraved by William Hamlin in 1798, for certificate of Providence Marine Society. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XII:1.

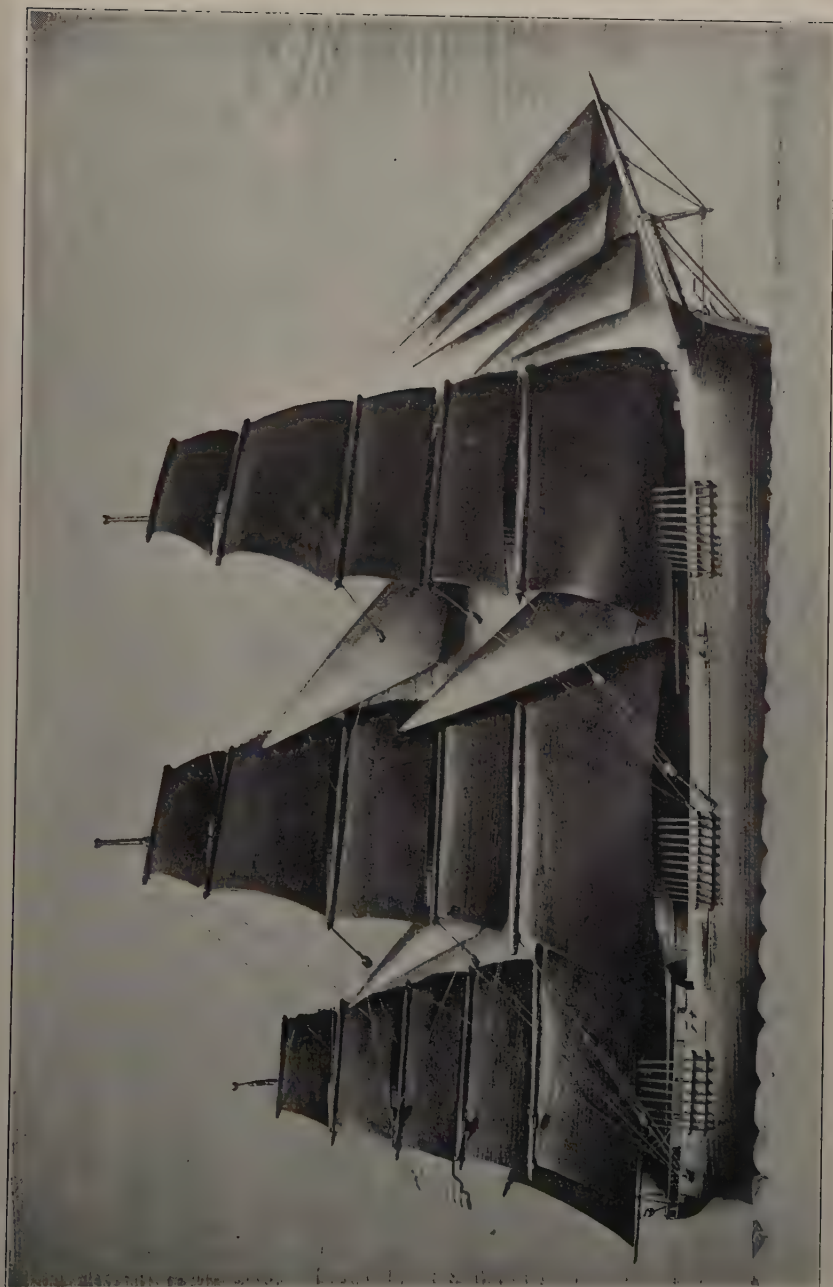
15. 1798 View of Beaver Tail, R. I. engraved by William Hamlin in 1798 for certificate of Providence Marine Society. Reproduced in *R. I. H. S. C.* XIV:98b.

## Notes

The following persons have been elected to membership in the Society:

Hon. J. Jerome Hahn  
Ira Hart Noyes, M.D.  
Mr. Frederick A. Stevens  
Mrs. Albert H. Tetlow





Ship Helen Clinton of Providence

A genealogy of the Mitchell family of Block Island by G. A. Moriarty, Jr., appeared in the October, 1928, issue of the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*.

*Dighton Rock. A Study of the Written Rocks of New England* is the title of Prof. Edmund B. Delabarre's latest book on this subject. It is a volume of 369 pages, profusely illustrated, which has recently (1928) been published in New York. The study deals with the marked rocks of Rhode Island, and these chapters are revised and enlarged editions of the series of Professor Delabarre's articles, which appeared a few years ago in the issues of these *Collections*.

The original manuscript *Note Book of John Saffin* is in the archives of the Rhode Island Historical Society. It has just been printed in a handsome volume of 199 pages with an introduction by Caroline Hazard. The notes, which were made between 1665 and 1708, cover a wide range of subjects, and give an idea of the point of view and the interests of a prominent New England man of affairs of a century and half ago.

*Genealogical Record of Robert Austin and his Lineal Descendants* by Maude Conrad Baker, 1928, is a volume of 114 pages, dealing with the descendants of Robert Austin, who settled in Rhode Island.

The Committee on Marking Historical Sites placed and dedicated a memorial tablet at Nine Men's Misery in Cumberland in November. The historical address, which was by Addison P. Munroe, Vice President of the Society, was printed in full in the Providence *Sunday Tribune* of November 11, 1928. The labor and cement utilized in the construction of the base and cairn were generously given by the members of the Cistercian Monastery of Our Lady of the Valley.

The *Bulletin of the Newport Historical Society* for December, 1928, contains an account of Newport Streets by Maud Lyman Stevens.

*Some of the Maine Descendants of Thomas Harris of Providence, R. I.*, by Mary Shaw Attwood, 1928, 2nd edition, is an illustrated pamphlet of 37 pages.

*The Silversmiths of Little Rest* by William Davis Miller, Kingston, Rhode Island, 1928, is a very interesting study of early Rhode Island artisans and their work, handsomely illustrated by Mount Press. It is an expansion and revision of a series of Mr. Miller's articles which appeared in these *Collections*.

The report of the Librarian of the Society, which was presented at the October meeting, contained the following paragraph, which is of particular interest to all the members of the Society:

"The crying need of the Society is up-to-date dust proof, well lighted modern museum cases. It is unfortunate that our museum, one of the most important historical museums in the United States, should have the distinction of being the most poorly housed state historical museum in the country. The cost of installing a sufficient number of modern museum cases would be between \$20,000 and \$25,000. As yet neither the State nor any private individual has been moved to make any contribution to this improvement."

On November 27, Prof. Wilfred H. Munro gave a talk before the Society on *Some Old Log-Books*.

### Roger Williams' Ancestry

The July, 1923, issue of the *Collections* contains a brief statement of the known facts in regard to the ancestry of Roger Williams. His father, James Williams, married Alice Pemberton of St. Albans, and the late Henry G. Waters, in his *Genealogical Gleanings* (I:332), mentioned a Roger Williams of St. Albans, clergyman, who may have been a relative of James. This Roger Williams of St. Albans was married in 1584 and died in 1619.



Mr. G. A. Moriarty, Jr., has recently found the following note in regard to Roger Williams of St. Albans:

"St. Albans Roger Williams, parson, B.D. Ordained Deacon and priest by Richard, Bishop of Gloucester 18 Sept. 1575 in the chantry superior called "Le Lodge" within the parish of Paynswick diocese of Gloucester. Instituted to the rectory of St. Albans by John, Bishop of London 7 March 1582, inducted 6 May 1583."<sup>1</sup>

As clergymen were usually ordained near where they lived, it seems probable that Roger Williams of St. Albans came from this vicinity. Paynswick is about thirty miles east of Llangibby in Monmouthshire, where another Roger Williams died in 1585. This may be a clue toward tracing the ancestry of James Williams.

## War of 1812 Muster Roll

Mr. Byron A. Pierce recently presented the Society with a War of 1812 muster roll entitled, "A Descriptive List of Men, Clothing, Arms, etc." This roll contains detailed descriptions of the men, and much additional information. The following list gives the rank, name, age, and birthplace of each soldier as it is given on the muster roll. For additional information the original manuscript should be consulted. It is mounted on page 51 of volume XVII of the Rhode Island Historical Society Manuscripts.

RANK	NAME	AGE	BIRTHPLACE		
			Town	County	State
Sergt.	Elisha Warren	24	Upton	Worcester	Mass.
"	James H. Pinney				
"	Ambrose Crane				
Corpl.	John Richardson	30	Chesterfield	Cheshire	Mass.
"	Israel Stebbins	24	Conway		"
Music	John Strange	54	Freetown	Bristol	Mass.
"	William Snell	22	Little Compton	Newport	R. I.

<sup>1</sup>Records of Old Archdec. of St. Albans, by H. R. Wilton Hall.

## WAR OF 1812 MUSTER ROLL

17

RANK	NAME	AGE	BIRTHPLACE		State
			Town	County	
Private	John Albert	40	Tiverton	Newport	R. I.
"	Edward Albrow	21	Newport	"	"
"	Thomas Bonney	23	Bridgewater		Mass.
"	Wendall Barrows	21	Plymouth		"
"	E'dall Ball				
"	Brinwell Baldwin				
"	Martin Carroll	32			Ireland
"	Eastman Corbin	36	Thompson		Conn.
"	William Craton	18	Boston	Suffolk	Mass.
"	James Carroll	27			Ireland
"	Benjamin Eddy	22	Providence	Providence	R. I.
"	Obed Fisher	18	Dedham	Norfolk	Mass.
"	Thomas Flood	25			England
"	Maturin Hopkins	20	Killingly		Conn.
"	Michael Hogan	38			Ireland
"	Moses Jenks	35	N. Providence	Providence	R. I.
"	William Lane	26	Providence	"	"
"	Job King	18	Tiverton	Newport	"
"	John King	23	Scituate	Providence	"
"	Samuel B. Lock	22	S. Kingstown	Washington	"
"	William Logan	28	Providence	Providence	"
"	John McGowen	36			Ireland
"	Wm. S. Martin	22	Newport	Newport	R. I.
"	Thomas Murry	33			Ireland
"	Edward Morse	36	Chester	Rockingham	N. H.
"	Thomas McCarvall	34			Ireland
"	William Oxx	33	Bristol	Bristol	Mass.
"	Lewis M. Obree	33	Boston	Suffolk	"
"	James Potter	22	Scituate	Providence	R. I.
"	George Randall	16	Cranston	"	"
"	John C. Runnals	28	Wiscasset		Mass.
"	Philip Round	37	Rehoboth	Bristol	"
"	Seth Squire	33	Berlin		Conn.
"	Gilbert Smith	38	Freetown	Bristol	Mass.
"	Robert Sutton	42			"
"	Benjamin Smith	36	Swansey		"
"	Clark Stone				
"	Daniel Sprague				
"	Henry Tifft	17	N. Kingstown	Washington	R. I.
"	Elisha Thomas				
"	Samuel Vanderwater	22	Poughkeepsie		N. Y.
"	Thomas Wiley	32	Middleton		Ireland
"	John Williams	21			N. Y.

RANK	NAME	AGE	BIRTHPLACE		State
			Town	County	
Private	Oliver Leffinwell				
"	Peter Conner				
"	James Quinn				
"	Jeremiah Johnson				
"	Nathan Beckworth	38	Norwich		Conn.
"	Jonathan Barker	42	Essex		Mass.

## An Account of the Commencement of the Cold Cut Nail Industry

William R. Staples Esqr.

Secry of the R. I. H. Society

Sir

I herewith present to the Society the *Shears* with which the first Cold or Cut nail was formed in this Country and probably the first ever cut in the world—they were obtained from Mr. Jeremiah Wilkinson of Cumberland, who I visited a few months since in company with Mr. David Wilkinson for the purpose of obtaining some information relative to the commencements of the *cold* or *cut* nail business in the Country. Mr. Wilkinson is 86 years of age the present month and is a very intelligent old Gentleman, he informed me that he followed the business of making hand Cards in the year 1776 at which time he experienced great difficulty in obtaining tacks for the purpose of nailing on his cards owing to the hostilities between this country and Great Britain, the consequent high price of English tacks and tediousness of the process in making them in this country in the old mode by hammering suggested to Mr. Wilkinson the idea of making them cold & for the purpose of trying the experiment he with these *Shears* cut from the plate of an old chest lock a number of tacks which he headed in a Smiths vice—Succeeding in this experiment he from that time made all the tacks he required in his business in the same way from Sheets of Iron—Subsequently he made larger nails. Such as shingle



and lathe nails from old Spanish hoops which were headed in a clamp or tool confined between the jaws of his vice. I obtained one of the heading tools which I also present with the Shears. The first improvement in the method of cutting and heading nails were made by one Eliazer Smith from whom I expect soon some further account of the business when I will lay it before the Society Mr. Wilkinson also made during the revolutionary war *pins* and darning *needles* from wire drawn by himself samples of which I also present—and altho the Gentleman's pacific principals would not permit him to take up arms in the revolutionary Struggles of his Country he certainly by his ingenuity and industry, contributed largely towards its Independance.

Respectfully

Samuel Green

Pawtucket, July 19, 1827

(R. I. H. S. Corres. I, p. 64.)



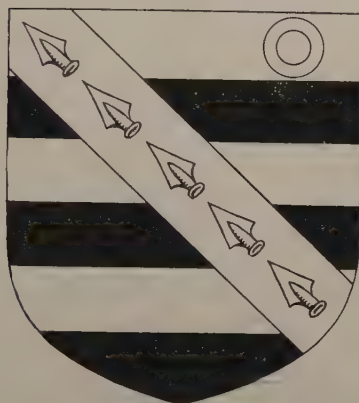
Window from William Coddington's house at Newport (1641).

—From original in the  
Museum of the Society.

## Colonial Heraldry

(Continued from vol. XXI, page 144)

### MERRETT



In St. John's churchyard, Providence, are two tombstones bearing the Merrett coat of arms, "Barry of six or and sable, on a bend five spear points, with in sinister chief point an annulet," with the crest "A talbot's head (probably erased) and collared." The engraver's dots, representing *or*, which appear on the stone, were mistaken for diapering by the artist, who drew the illustration for the *Heraldic Journal*, (III:168). These arms appear on the tombs of John Merrett of London, Esquire, who died in Providence in 1770, and his wife, Margaret, who died in 1769.

Burke gives the arms of the Merretts of London, granted July 13, 1666, as "Barry of six argent and sable, a bend ermine," and the arms of Maryet or Maryot of Warw., Glouc., Berksh. and Sussex as "Barry of 6 or and sable" with the crest "A talbot pass. sa. collared and lined or, the line coiled at the end." The ermine spots of the bend of the original coat may have been mistaken by the stone cutter for spear heads. and the annulet was probably added for cadency for the fifth son.

## BROWN OF PROVIDENCE



The earliest record in regard to the use of arms by the Chad Brown family of Providence is a letter written by Moses Brown of Providence, September 2, 1763, to Benjamin Burt of Boston, in which letter Brown ordered a mustard pot to be engraved with "The Arms, a chevron between three Lyons paws erectd within a bordure and an Eagle displayed and the same that Mr. N. Hurd Ingraved on a seal for me sometime since," (*Moses Brown Papers*, volume I. No. 87 in the Rhode Island Historical Society library). As used by the descendants of Moses Brown's brothers, these arms are "Gules, a chevron or between three lion's gambes erect and erased argent<sup>1</sup> within a border of the second, on a chief of the same an eagle displayed sable." This seems to be a variant of "Gules a chevron between three lion's gambes erect and erased within a border argent, on a chief of the second an eagle displayed sable, crowned or," which is given in the Visitation of Essex, 1612, for the Brownes of Abbotts Roodinge, Essex, of whom Sir Weston Browne was head of the family in the time of Henry

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<sup>1</sup>They are sometimes depicted "proper," as on the title page of the John Carter Brown Library catalogue, 1865, but this was probably an error.



VIII. The pedigree is traced to Sir Weston's great grandfather, Robert Browne, who came from the west of England.

Burke, in his *General Armory*, lists several variant coats, and, although this coat of the Browns of Essex seems to be the eldest on record, there was presumably a still earlier or parent coat, without any border and without the chief and eagle.

Burke (*Peerage* 1884) gives the arms of Sir William Brown, the founder of Brown, Shipley and Co., and grandson of William Brown of Cairnknir, co. Antrim, Ireland, as "Gules a chevron or between two bear's paws<sup>1</sup> erased, in chief argent, and four hands conjoined in saltire of the second in base; on a chief engrailed or, an eagle displayed sable," with the escutcheon of a baronet in honor point.

This family would seem to have considered themselves an offshoot of the Brownes<sup>2</sup> of Carlow, Ireland, which was founded by Robert Browne, who went to Ireland in 1650.

The omission of the border was evidently due to the belief that it was a mark of difference, and that it was no longer necessary, as the difference was shown by the four hands conjoined in place of the third gamb. The eagle, and presumably the chief, which doubtless was merely to hold the eagle, was not a part of the parent coat.

The eagle was an augmentation granted in 1511 by the King of Aragon to Sir Weston Browne, who served in the expedition against Sicily and is described as "on a chief argent displayed regardant sable, crowned and membered or." The crown seems to have been lost off the head of the eagle of the Browne's arms between 1612, the date of the visitation, and 1632, the date of the publication of Guillim's "Display of Heraldrie," in which he lists the Browne arms as "Gules a chevron between three lion's paws erect and erased within a bordure argent, on a chief of the second an eagle displayed sable," but gives no crest.

<sup>1</sup>Evidently an error for "lion's gamb."

<sup>2</sup>English surnames were adopted by many Irish families, just as English surnames have been adopted by many non-English immigrants to America, and so similarity of surname can not be taken as evidence of blood relationship, (Cf. *Ancestor* I:231).

The change in the tincture of the chevron, chief, and bordure from *argent* to *or* by the Browns of Providence was probably an intentional change for difference as the gambs were left argent, their original color.

The original Browne arms therefore would seem to have been "Gules a chevron between three lion's gambs argent."

Browns, who were descended from the ancestors of Sir Weston Brown, and entitled to this parent coat, might and probably did, through ignorance of the augmentation, assume or adopt Sir Weston's coat, with intentional and sometimes accidental variations.

Other Browns, unrelated or unable to prove relationship, may also have assumed these arms.

The crest used by the Browns of Providence is a griffin's head erased, doubtless derived from the eagle of the chief<sup>1</sup>. On these arms, as cut on the facade of the John Carter Brown library at Providence, the three lion's gambs, through an error of the stone-cutter, accidentally appear as three ermine spots.

It is quite possible that unintentionally differences of this sort in the past have given rise to many of the various slight differences in coats of arms, as borne in the present day by various families of the same name.

### LANGWORTHY

Lawrence Langworthy of Ashburton, Devon, England, died at Newport, R. I., in 1739 at the age of 47, and his grave is marked by an armorial gravestone. The design is badly obliterated by time, but a few lines can be made out. The arms are evidently Langworthy, (the design of which has almost entirely disappeared, but shows traces of a chevron) impaling the arms of his wife Mary ——— of Dartmouth, which is a chevron

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<sup>1</sup>A griffin's head differs from an eagle's head in that the former has ears. In regard to this point, Dr. Bowditch writes: "I incline to the belief that many of the points of distinction, for example a griffin's ears, are artificial, for eagles are so often represented with a tufted head, that the transition from the tufts to ears may be easy and natural. The transition may often have been unintentional on the part of an engraver."

between three now badly obliterated charges. Mary's family name is not given. This is the only instance of an impaled coat on a Rhode Island colonial gravestone. The crest is a greyhound courant, which is strongly reminiscent of the arms of Langworthy of Bath, Somersetshire, which are given by Burke as "Sable, three greyhounds courant in pale argent," although the crest is "A demi-stag proper." The arms of Lanhorgy of Cornwall are given as "Azure three greyhounds argent," evidently a variant spelling of the name and a variant coat, the sable of the field having been changed doubtless accidentally to azure, a change which occurs often in English coats, due probably to the fading of the black to blue.



There seems to have been much confusion both in the spelling of the name and in the blazon of the arms. The parent coat was probably "Sable three dogs Argent," but at present it does not seem possible to tell whether the dogs were originally greyhounds or talbots. On small armorial seals it would be hard to determine which breed was pictured, and it might be as difficult in the case of the crude work of many of the none-too-skilful stone cutters of earlier days. It may not be possible to determine the original arrangement of the charges, whether

they were in pale or 2, 1, but for greyhounds "in pale" would seem to be the older arrangement<sup>1</sup>.

Papworth gives "Azure three greyhounds passant Argent" for Lenhorgy of Cornwell, which may be identical with the coat ascribed both by Burke and Papworth to Lanhorgy.

A still later development is the coat "Argent a fesse ermines between three greyhounds sable collared gules," which was ascribed to Langhergy of Cornwall by Edmondson in 1780. The fesse is clearly for difference, and the reversal of tinctures is either an accident or also for difference. The collars are evidently a late addition.

The branch of the family, that considered the charges to be talbots, according to Papworth, originally bore them statant<sup>2</sup>. He gives "Sable a chevron between three talbots statant argent" for Lanhergy of Cornwall, (quoting from Glover's MS and Harl. MS. 1392 and 1459), and Baring-Gould (quoting from Harl. MS. 4632) gives "Sable a chevron between three talbots passant argent" for Lanhergh of Devon or Cornwall. Papworth ascribes this coat to Lampergy and Lanpergy, and states that it appears in Glover's printed *Ordinary*, but that it is an error for the preceding coat.

It may be observed that the old fashioned script letter "h," with the loop below the line instead of above, might easily be mistaken for a "p," and so give rise to the spellings Lampergy and Lanpergy. The arms, used by Lawrence Langworthy of Newport, probably were "Sable, a chevron between three greyhounds courant Argent," with the crest "A greyhound courant argent," although, of course, talbots may have been intended.

## COLLINS

James Collins, who was born December 26, 1700, married in 1727 Mary, daughter of Captain Josiah Arnold of Conanicut. A manuscript containing a pen and ink sketch of the Collins

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Oswald Barron in *The Ancestor*, I:53.

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Bowditch calls attention to the fact that passant would seem to be an older posture than statant.



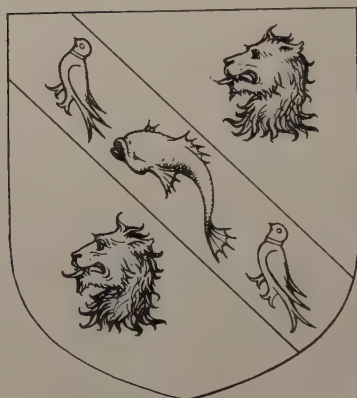
coat of arms, which was probably made for one of James Collin's children or grandchildren in the latter half of the eighteenth century, was handed down in the family, and is now in the library of the Rhode Island Historical Society, (*Cranston Papers*, p. 21).

The arms are "Gules on a bend or three martlets azure, all within a border ermine," with the crest a cockatrice,



Guillim in 1724 ascribed the arms, "Gules on a bend or three martlets azure, all within a border ermine," without a crest to the Collins of Sussex, but Burke ascribes these arms with the crest, "A demi griffin or, beaked and legged gules, collared ermine," to the Collins of Sittingbourn in Kent, of London, and of Sussex.

## FRANKLIN



The Franklin coat of arms, "On a bend between two lion's heads erased a dolphin embowed between two martlets," appears on the gravestone of Abiah Buckmaster of Newport, who died in 1754. She was daughter of James Franklin, and niece of the famous Benjamin Franklin. The arms, "Argent on a bend between two lion's heads erased gules, a dolphin embowed of the field, between as many martlets close or, collared azure," with the crest, "A conger eel's head erect or, erased per fesse gules, between two branches vert" are ascribed by Burke to the Franklins of Rainham, Norfolk, England, and with the crest, "A dolphin's head in pale argent, erased gules, finned or, between two branches vert," to Franklin, late Governor of New Jersey, (i. e. William Franklin, son of Benjamin). The latter crest may easily have been an unintentional variant of the former. Similar arms, with the first-mentioned crest, appear on the bookplate of John Franklin of Boston<sup>1</sup> (1690-1756). This bookplate, which was the work of James Turner, is illustrated in the *Heraldic Journal* (II:97). Similar arms were used by Benjamin Franklin in 1758, (*N. E. H. & G. R.* XIV:200).

The father of James, John, and Benjamin, was Josiah Frank-

<sup>1</sup>He resided for a while at Newport, R. I.

lin of Ecton, Northamptonshire, England, who was son of Thomas, son of Henry, son of Thomas Franklin of Ecton, blacksmith, who was living in the time of Henry VIII, (*Her. Jour.* II:97, III:67, 117, and *Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, Apr. 1887). The earliest use of these arms by this family seems to have been on the bookplate of John Franklin, or the gravestone of Abiah, and no evidence has as yet been found proving that Thomas, the blacksmith, or his descendants, used armorial bearings in either the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries.

Dr. Bowditch recently examined Benjamin Franklin's seal (*Chamberlain Coll.* Boston Pub. Lib.), and thinks that the sprigs in the crest are probably palm branches.

Edmondson (1780) describes the arms of the Franklins of Devonshire as "Argent on a bend between two lion's heads erased gules, a dolphin embowed between two martlets or," with the crest "A dolphin's head argent erased gules, fined or, between two branches vert." Sometimes the crest is described as a fish's head erased.

The *Heraldic Journal* (II:97) suggests that it "seems very probable that Benjamin Franklin *may* have obtained a grant of these arms." Vermont, some twenty years later, in 1886 (p. 18) elaborates this to "It is believed that the Franklin brothers obtained the grant of these arms . . .," and Holden, in 1898, in *A Primer of Heraldry for Americans* (Int. note, p. IX) still further embellishes the idea in these words: "Benjamin Franklin applied for and obtained a grant of armorial bearings." As a matter of fact, no grant of arms was ever made to Benjamin Franklin by the College of Arms.

## CODDINGTON

William Coddington of Newport used an armorial seal, "A chevron between three bugle horns," from 1651 to 1675, (M. H. S., *Winthrop Papers*, III:75, 76, 77, and Shepley Library. Cf. *R. I. H. S. C.* XIV:32). This seal was apparently not a Coddington seal, and it may have belonged to William Coddington's maternal grandfather.

The so-called arms of William Coddington appear on a painting presented by Caleb Tripp to the city of Newport in 1855. This painting formerly hung in the office of the Mayor of Newport, but can not now be found.

It was called "the coat-of-arms of the Coddington family" in 1855, but nothing definitely is known in regard to its history before that date.

Mason in his *Reminiscences of Newport* (1884) and Van Zandt in his *Newport Ballads* (1894) ascribe the ownership of this armorial painting to Betsey Coddington, who died in 1842, but Judge Darius Baker, in a critical survey of the subject in the *Bulletin of the Newport Historical Society* for April 1918, shows that there is no real evidence in support of the tradition that Betsey Coddington owned the coat of arms. Even if she did own it, there is no evidence that it was a Coddington coat, and the fact that she became mentally unbalanced would make her statements in regard to it of little value.

The armorial painting was evidently the hatchment of a man who had been married twice. Mrs. Albert H. Tetlow of Taunton, who examined the hatchment some years ago, has kindly supplied me with a blazon of it. The arms were "Gules three crescents with between the horns of each an estoile or, a crescent for difference; impaling, per fess; in chief gules a griffin segreant or, a chief argent; in base, per pale argent and sable three crescents counterchanged" with the crest, "out of a ducal coronet an estoile or." The arms as colored can not be identified, but with slight changes might seem to have been intended for Bateman, impaling Short and Topcliff. On the other hand the husband's coat and the crest bear a certain resemblance to the arms of John Saffin of Boston and Narragansett, who died in 1710.

It seems very probable that this hatchment was not an American colonial hatchment, but merely some English hatchment with no American connection other than that some eighteenth or nineteenth century descendant may have brought it to this country. Indeed there is no evidence of its presence in Newport during the colonial period.

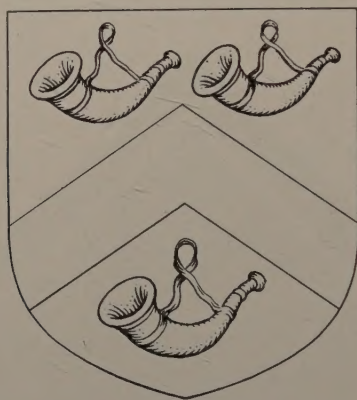


Vermont, in his *America Heraldica*, (p. 106), states that William Coddington, on a letter to Governor Leverett, used an armorial seal bearing the device "Argent a fess embattled counter-embattled sable, between three lions passant gules."



HATCHMENT WHICH FORMERLY HUNG IN THE  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR OF NEWPORT, R. I.

These are the arms of the Codringtons of Wroughton, Wiltshire, according to Burke. This armorial seal, mentioned by Vermont, can not now be found.



In 1640 William Coddington called James Burt "my cozen Burt," (*Doc. Hist. of R. I.*, II:167), and on this account Mrs. Tetlow suggested that the "bugle-horn seal" may have belonged to his wife's family, for the family name of his second wife is unknown, and might have been Burt. They were married about 1631, and she died in 1647, (*Austin's Gen. Dict. of R. I.*, p. 276). Burke gives the arms, "Argent on a chevron between three bugle horns sable, stringed gules, as many crosses crosslet of the field," for the Burts of Maiden Earleigh, Berkshire, and three other Burt arms as similar with variant tinctures and with crosses crosslet fitchée. Papworth gives similar arms for Birt, Burt, Byrt and Byrtt. If an early Burt coat without crosses on the chevron could be found, this theory would seem the more probable.

After Coddington's death, this bugle horn seal was used in 1684 by Philip Wharton and Nathaniel Briggs, and in 1685 by Thomas Willett, (*R. I. H. M.* V:68). In 1685 it was used by Andrew Willett and Ann, his wife, daughter of William Coddington, on a deed now in the Newport Historical Society library.



